



St. Patrick's Primary School

Mobile Phones & Electronic Devices Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was drawn up in January 2022 in response to technological advances and the significant increase in hand held electronic gadgets amongst the school population over recent years.

Rationale

The possession and use of mobile phones by school pupils is now extensive, even in the primary school sector. The school strongly discourages the bringing of mobile phones to school by students, as it adds unnecessary distractions or disruptions to the core business of teaching and learning. In addition, they are a potential and real source of bullying and abuse through texting and the dissemination of unacceptable and inappropriate images. The school is prepared to allow mobile phones on the premises but only within the parameters of the policy as stated below.

Use of mobile phones presents a number of problems, including:

- Mobile phones can be valuable items and might render a pupil vulnerable to theft
- Mobile phones (and their cost and level of sophistication – or otherwise) can make pupils objects of envy or disparagement and could have implications with regard to discipline and potential bullying

- Even when apparently silent, the use of mobiles phones for texting purposes could be potentially undermining of classroom discipline
- Use of camera phones could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images
- Many of the above issues also pertain to other electronic devices - smart watches capable of recording footage or taking pictures/ iPods/iPads/tablets/airpods etc. They can be very intrusive, distracting and antisocial in a school environment
- Mobile phones may be used to conduct bullying campaigns

Relationship to School Ethos

The unauthorized use of mobile phones and other electronic gadgets contravenes the provision of a safe and secure school environment conducive to learning, a provision which is central to the mission statement and ethos of St. Patrick's Primary School.

Aims

- To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones & electronic devices at our school.
- To outline the procedures of this policy.
- To lessen intrusions on and distractions to children's learning

Internal School Procedures

The following are the guidelines for mobile phone & electronic device usage in the school:

Mobile Phone Use by Children

1. Pupils are encouraged not to bring mobile phones to school. However, the school understands that a pupil may need to have a phone to contact a parent after school. In this instance, pupils may carry a mobile phone on their person but the phone must remain turned off in their school bags at all times during school hours.
2. Children are not allowed to use their mobile phones anywhere on the school grounds during school hours.
3. Use of mobile phones is also not permitted during after school activities, or on school tours or trips.

4. Phones must be stored in their school bag by the pupil. The school holds no responsibility for phones lost, stolen or damaged on school grounds or on external school visits.
5. Personal electronic gadgets (including tablets, ipads or consoles) are not allowed in school, either during school hours or on school tours.
6. Children who need to contact home in an emergency during school hours may do so through their class teacher/office using the school landline phone.
7. Any pupil who uses a mobile phone or brings an electronic device to school risks having it confiscated. This device will be sent to the Principal's office and only returned when the parent personally collects the phone from the office.
8. If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone or any other device of either other pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Code of Behaviour - [W Code of Behaviour June 2023.docx](#) .
9. The above guidelines apply to all forms of electronic devices - mobile phones, iPads, tablets, watches that are capable of recording or taking images

Mobile Phone Use by Staff

1. Staff use of mobile phones will be confined to break times and after school (except in the case of an emergency).
2. In certain situations staff may use their phone during lessons to access lesson content/resources/other school related material when it is not possible to access the teaching PC. When this happens, the teacher will make the class aware that he/she is using the mobile phone for this purpose.
3. In very exceptional circumstances (eg an ill family member) the teacher may, with the permission of the principal, have their phones on for a period.
4. Staff are reminded to be careful when using their personal mobile phones to contact parents. For privacy & personal safety, teachers should use the school phone or if their personal phone must be used, the personal phone number should be withheld through the phone settings.
5. Use of mobile phones to take photographs of class activities is permitted, however these photos must be uploaded to the class page on Google Drive for storage and then deleted off the teacher's phone.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff, parents and pupils share in the coordination and implementation of this policy.

All staff, parents & pupils have a responsibility for appropriately using electronic gadgets & phones. The school's Internet AUP and Anti-Bullying Policy further support this..

Evaluation

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis and amendments added as new technology comes on stream.

Implementation

This policy has been in place since January 2022, and will be reviewed annually at the beginning of each school year. This is in order to make new staff aware of the procedures in place around mobile phones and electronic devices in our school. It will continue to be implemented following ratification.

Ratification:

The latest version of this policy was updated in October 2024.

Signed: *Fr. Tony Finn (Chairperson of the Board of Management)*

Signed: *Róna Donoghue (Acting Principal)*

Date: **16/10/2024**

** Please note that the signed copy of this policy is in the school office*